III Dozen

Still Free!

MOUSE EGGS

- Est. 1975 -

Third Series

The Ides of March Issue

Typos © the poet

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2 DOZEN MOUSE EGGS
2021
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MARC NERENBERG

Everybody loves Mouse Eggs

Everybody loves Mouse Eggs, yes, everybody do!
Everybody loves Mouse Eggs, you know that's true!
Everybody loves Mouse Eggs, and so will you!

Mouse Eggs was a magazine, lyin' dead in a hearse,
A defunct periodical, oh, what fate could be worse?
But now it's risen like a phoenix, all filled up with verse!

A poetic publication, out there in cyberspace!
A poetry compendium, built with pain and grace!
If you're lookin' for that poetry, Mouse Eggs is the place!

You'll love it in mornin', and in the afternoon.
You'll love it in the evenin', beneath the silvery moon.
And there's a brand new Mouse Eggs comin' at you soon!

Everybody loves Mouse Eggs, yes, everybody do, do, do!
Everybody loves Mouse Eggs, and so will you, you, you!
Oh, there's a brand new Mouse Eggs coming soon for you!

Watch Marc& his doppelgangers perform this ditty

https://youtu.be/fBEGKSuTcAY

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GEORGE BOWERING

A Letter Instead

In real life I'm too shy to talk to people.
But every once in a while I wish I could sit and yak it up with, say,
Joe Brainard. It's always people who have died so it's
too late, things didn't work out about places and geography and times and
what you were doing for a living. Once I drove across Portugal
to meet a Spanish poet I had been writing letters to for years, and then
I guess I was looking for an excuse, because the woman I was with
didn't want to give any of our holiday time to such a person,
never read any of his poetry, he probably was not up to her standards,
so I made a left turn maybe fifty kilometers from Badajoz, mumbling
inside my own braincase about how I didn't measure up, and maybe
it wasn't shyness after all, but not measuring up, not fright but
dissatisfaction, and that can't be right, it was she that used long words,
not I. Once with a friend who didn't mind, I drove north from Boston
to see a recent ghost I loved. but I could have dropped in on
Larry Eigner, with whom I had been trading letters for years,
but could I do it? Yes, I know, lots of people couldn't do it,
including the ghost, but this was what it always was. How many
front steps had I stood on, how many times had I gone home
and written a letter instead? I'll bet Joe Brainard never met
Larry Eigner, never even stood on the street and looked up at his tower
window. I'll bet we could have helped each other, I could have
held his hand, while with his other hand he stuck his finger on the doorbell.

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GEORGE BOWERING

Frank O'Hara's Sun

Frank O'Hara's sun
slept. Don't you love those verbs?
Slept, crept, swept, wept?

They are so sincere,
especially late at night
or when the light is
a clipped fingernail in the morning.

Frank O'Hara's sun slept
but he didn't. Hardly
ever. He stepped
over sleeping relatives

till the end of his life
he was stepping over everyone
who wasn't coming to the bar
or just as far.

I said sincere. Frank O'Hara's sun
kept its word, met him
coming round the far side,
the quiet side, the neap tide.

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GEORGE BOWERING

In a hillside
above my dry town

I dug a hole out
of which I lifted

a knife, a baseball
and finally

this poem.

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GEORGE BOWERING

When I Was

When I was a kid big guys
were always beating me up

so out of the back page of a comic book
I mailed a form to a poetry academy

and learned scansion and so on,
similies and the like.

I got my poem "Bam!" published by DC,
and my life has been a lot better ever since.

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CAROLYN MARIE SOUAID

Arctic Flight

January limped in like an old crone:
haggard snow, a weak pulse
of sky through the skinny trees.

All last fall, the graveyard leached
into the water table. Leaves wallowed
in their own waste. Soon,
even the birds were spent.

I, myself, flew
into exile--

way north of the trees
with a knapsack, and a bottle of brandy
buried in my eiderdown coat

stared from the small plane
as my fissured, brown
liver-spotted town
vaporized in the dark air

and when I woke, the world had accumulated again
outside my window

the strapping, white, freshness of it
shoveling life
back into my eyes.

—from *Snow Formations*, Signature Editions, 2002

Watch the video here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XwDUREiU-SM

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EHAB LOTAYEF & CAROLYN MARIE SOUAID

Snowflakes

I am thinking of the energy that binds us
the distances that separate us
the pain that blinds us
the love that pains us.

I awoke today to fresh snow,
the origin stories of each flake.
One source
yet no two are alike.

Why have the stars gathered us
in false fraternity?

(a collaboration for Muslim Awareness Week, 2021)

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KEN NORRIS

23

Loving her was like driving a new Maserati
down a dead end street. Loving her was red.

And love never happens that way again.

Love at twenty-three so deep and challenging.

If we kept on like that for a lifetime
we would surely die.

Now I stand in the shadows of seventy
nodding my head in time to the music,
saying, Yes, I knew that.

Loving her *was* red.

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KEN NORRIS

COOL DRY PLACE

Confusion boats.

And all the various mutinies.

There's traction in the action.

And only the lonely know Brooklyn.

Any road will take you there.

The contemporary scene
being lean and mean.

On the other hand,
I'm just the drugs I take.

Lefty, Nelson, Charlie T. Jr.,
Lucky, and Otis:
take the secret of life
and put it
in a cool, dry place.

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KEN NORRIS

CULTURAL MARGINALIA

The Great American Poet read his Lana Turner poem.
Robert Lowell didn't like it at all.
His response winds up in the dustbin of history.

Sometimes I'm just producing cultural marginalia.
Poetry comments, about everything.
The trivial and the grand.

Louis said we were kibitzers,
and I guess that's true. My poems have never been
broad cultural statements.

Someday someone will realize I was speaking
to them, for them.

It's the 21st century, and everyone's
distracted. Somehow culture goes on.

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KEN NORRIS

SYRUP

I do all my best work there.

The incursions of snow do not move me.

Trapped in a winter of everyone's discontent.

I pour syrup over the oatmeal.

While the heater blasts.

Perfecting the art of doing odd tasks.

The confusing wetness of rolled-up sleeves.

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KEN NORRIS

YOU TOOK MY BREATH AWAY

Pandemic highway to the boneyard.

You took my breath away.

Cook's Bay in the tropic morning light.

You took my breath away.

Climbing out of clothes into nakedness.

You took my breath away.

Eating cereal slowly out of a small white bowl.

You took my breath away.

Looking at me shyly over your shoulder.

You took my breath away.

Standing there, waiting for me in the sparkling shower.

You took my breath away.

As the sun setting in blood-red sky over Huahine.

You took my breath away.

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rob mclennan

Four poems for my fifty-first birthday

1.

Unexpectedly, bare. A year into lockdown, pandemic,
an unexposed stretch. As a raw nerve,

housebound. The silence

of this great noise.

2.

Sawako Nakayasu: *Say Translation*
Is Art. Untended branches, shedding

burdensome leaves. The difficulty

of elegy, documentary, archive. The temptation
to speak, with hopes

of saying anything.

3.

The audience

ate it up. I can see

no connection.

4.

Parthenogenesis. We all scream
for ice cream. The long former vowel

of the English word "red": as
a reed.

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rob mclennan

Four poems for Michael Dennis
(1956-2020)

1.
A blue fade: tarantula arms across
Yukio Mishima's

sleeping beauties, petals; these
diminished leaves, another

white wall, poem. Where you sketched
Wayne Gretzky; lifting out, and up

his latest record-breaking win.

2.
Canvas on hardwood; two bare feet,
a claw-tub bathroom and

expansive bookshelves. A period
of morning, mourning

across every battle, the nature
of desire.

3.
The rain, you
wrote, it fell

like rain.

4.
What day of the week did you write
your poem about spiders? Where

did light fall, and in which
direction? I imagine

you by third-storey window,
facing Bank Street, possibly

nineteen eighty-six, or eighty-five,
cascade of businesses long emptied

along the Somerset to Laurier
corridor, dust clouds tunnelling the absolute.

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CHRISTINA SHAH

meditative smoking man mixes it up

he circulates, venous blood between Saskatoon's bus loops
punched-down paunch, overproofed
challah dough boils a navy blue swell
over the beltline.

today, a midnight cowboy hat with a tattling
metal conchoed crown
on a hedgehog head.
same hypertensive eyeballs
and ritual benzene mantra
on his burning church walkabout.

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CHRISTINA SHAH

seafood department

Neptune's flesh linens–
filleted billet-doux
displayed under clingfilm
on stainless steel gallery shelves

pictures of the floating world

styrofoam futons, dormitory-style
their studded, extruded blue spoom
does not hint at ichthyosauric history

carp's branded scales
a bleeding *irezumi* iron street grate

array of baby octopus
cartilaginous little baseball mitts

dressed smelts– prophets
gleaming in mass graves

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CHRISTINA SHAH

snoring

apnea's gap–
a growling glottal stop.
then tongue tumbles back
into the palate's crevasse

exasperated, his spouse can't take this
passed-out rasping in her ear,
carotid zydeco of his breath's seized engine,
this thoracic panic

it's late-night exile
from satin to sweaty leather
he leaves her curling warm bum
for the solitary lolling sprawl

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CHRISTINA SHAH

botulinum toxin

the dentist's sideshow
the home canner's cold sweat

spoiling poison rods are revealed,
flooded with crystal violet

it's the microbial tightrope walker
lurking in the dirt,

waiting to pervert ferments
or erase faces

for that *refreshed look*

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Alaska Pipe-dream

The following is an impression which Ferlinghetti wrote yesterday after glancing through the Gazette yesterday morning. It is written in the style which made the Beats as famous as they were infamous.

By LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI

One fine day like the day after tomorrow while the Canadian Energy Minister was minding his own business by saying the Alaska oil pipeline was really an **internal matter** in the USA and not for Canadians to jump into one fine day in the not very distant future while the Energy Minister was talking he suddenly noticed that one leg of his trousers was wet and hoping it was not what he thought it was he reached down and determined that in fact it was not an internal matter at all but an external matter of oil and yet not pure oil for when he inspected his hand he found it not only oily but bloody and when he rushed to the lab to find out why blood was mixed with oil and whether or not it was **his** blood mixed with **their** oil or **their** blood mixed with **his** oil or whatever he was informed by the Lab hired by the oil company that there was really nothing to worry about at all since the blood would not stop the oil from working perfectly in American war machines and automobiles not to mention the Mayor of Montreal's Ford and in any case the blood was not the Canadian minister's blood and it was not the American people's blood it was simply the blood of one billion waterfowl who had been unable to feed in the tundra which had been disrupted by the perfectly innocent Pipeline and it was simply the blood of one billion fish in Canadian waterways and one billion fish in Canadian seaways who were no longer able to eat the plankton now flavoured with salted oil and it was simply the blood of one billion deer in the Northern Territory and one billion other wild animals in other frozen territories in the Siberia of Canada which had gradually become unfrozen for the first time in recorded time due to the world's largest Oil Spill which had resulted from earthquake pipeline rupturings which caused a great wash of hot underground oil to pour Eastward from Alaska all over the geologic underground strataface of Canada so that the St. Lawrence dripped both oil and animal blood into the water supply of the City of Montreal but this was strictly an Internal American Matter and we were not concerned at all at all

arcmtl 20

Ruth Taylor

Conjuring

the way it seems:
the dust of dissipated dreams
settles on our window panes
and morning creeps
into our solitary rooms
like ectoplasm
of brewing coffee beans
seeping from a breakfast with the gods
we wake
to name the day,
smearing out peekholes on the glass
and catch a glimpse of cats
racing after wrappers in the street
spread out below, between us
as coincidental as the grin
we wipe into the dust —
an accident of magic
we've agreed
it is no day
for black umbrellas.

2021

RUTH TAYLOR

Winter Daze

For weeks and weeks to come I'll mark
the shaggy squirrels' nest in the poplar's fork.
I'll reckon degrees in central heating smoke
or curl up in my blue room under a blue blanket.
Maybe I'll wear two pairs of socks in my boots
and head out to the bar for a snootful of warmth—
chnces are some local will say "Cold day out there eh?"
and I'll say, "Yeah, cold in here too."

And that say it all—or almost all
for it's neither snap nor spell
that chills my lonely potatoe in its lonely pot
and does quite a number on the heart as well
but that bitching gelidity out there that wrought
last night's dream of you: sauna hot!

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RUTH TAYLOR

O Love Be Leaf

O Love be leaf
and fleet as antboats be
on stream of happy weep
and blow a good red nose
blow and blow

O Love be
Poof
aladdin dust
and smoke be proof
be windy
blow
and blow

O Love be quickly slow

O Love

Published in The McGill Observer
Vol. 5 No. 1 Oct. 1983

Ruth, an honorary member of the Vehicule Poets,
died Feb 18, 2006.
Too soon.

arcmtl 2021

JOHN MCAULEY

A Found Poem at Nuclear Medicine

Take a blue pill and wait two hours.
Crawl over hard metal surfaces.

They're sick people.
They make noises.

Lab-grown diamonds are carefully cut
for you, so happy longevity and survival
of continuous perspective.

Here are photomicrographs
of the transparent secular good. Icy prisms against wrong,
but is that enough?

African diggers break their backs to find the moral diamond,
the antithesis of benefit. Readers will be dumbstruck by
chocolatical naked diamonds snuggling in strawberries and gold.

Those born before 1945 and those after 1982
are so different and so branded.

AI will upgrade the rough to polished,
according to those in the know in *Rapaport Magazine*.

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ENDRE FARKAS

For Éva Weisz Farkas

This is your death day
when alone
with me not there
surrounded by people wearing masks
gowns and knowledge
you let go of this world.

I was with you an hour before
watching blood drip into your vein.
You told me to go home
you were feeling fine.

Somebody told me
that some people
want to take their last breath
alone.

Knowing you
the 5'3" strength of the family
who wore the pants
who said I know where this will lead to
who said I know everything
I take some comfort in that
you might have thought that.

So
I light the candle
to remember you
your finely sewn seamed dresses
your creamy cherry soup
your love of sentimental poems
your stubborn certainty
your fingers wrapped around a knife
ready for anyone who'd threaten your child.

I am alone knowing nothing
writing these words
a poem aflame with a calmness
filled with absence and guilt
the winter sun shining in.

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ENDRE FARKAS

I love you

Subject verb object
A three-syllable haiku
The mystery of two

I love you

Better put these seeds
on a high, high shelf
make it hard to reach

I love you

Subject verb object
The impregnable sentence
How serious, how

I love you

How weighted, how light
A demonstrative moment
tongue flicks anxiously

I love you

Are there tribes somewhere
whose lexicon lacks these words
Or have they died out?

This is a sort of a cento based on words and lines from Julian Barnes's book *A History of the World in 101/2 Chapters*

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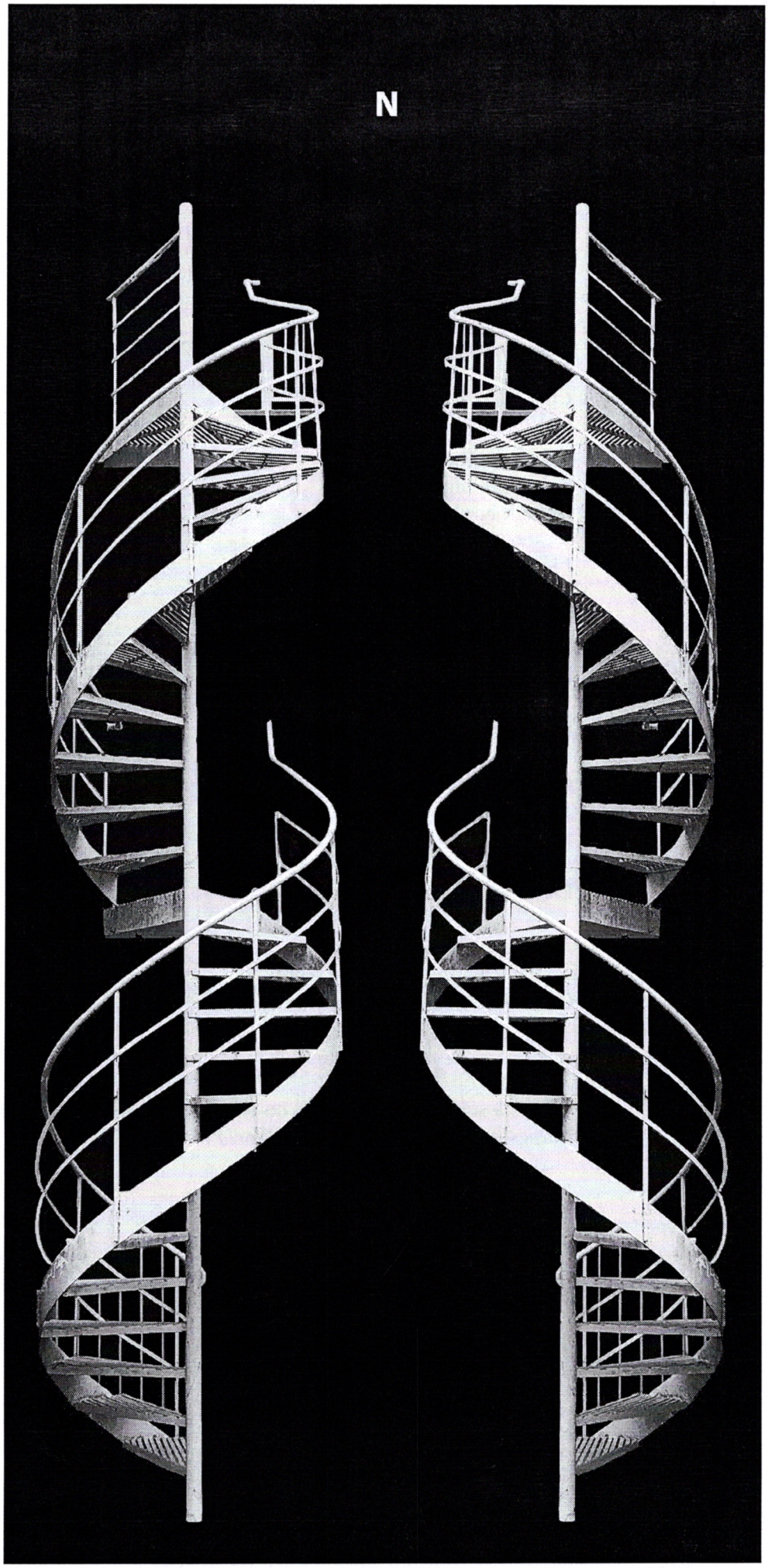
D N A

ENDRE FARKAS



the universe
me
are
in
there
say
the crystal eye
the microscope
I see
Fred Astaire
gingerly
ascending
descending
in a tux
top hat
spats
cane
tapping out
the code
me
stumbling about
making
senseing
Who
What
When
Where
Why
I am
here
on the stairway
on my way
to heaven
to hell
to nowhere
in particular

in particular
to nowhere
to hell
to heaven
on my way
on the stairway
here
I am
Why
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Who
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making
stumbling about
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tapping out
the code
cane
spats
top hat
in a tux
descending
ascending
gingerly
Fred Astaire
I see
the microscope
the crystal eye
say
there
in
are
me
the universe

ENDRE FARKAS

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